

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the Abstract with the following amended Abstract:

ABSTRACT

~~Apparatus and methods are disclosed by which it is determined which~~
~~ports in a system can be combined together to form a team and/or whether ports~~
~~that are already operated as part of a team are eligible to continue to be operated~~
~~in the team. A network controller system comprising a plurality of network ports~~
~~and a driver system that operates the plurality of network ports. The driver system~~
~~determines which of the network ports can be combined together to form a team.~~
~~Each network port in the team is associated with a different network interface~~
~~card (NIC). The NICs are associated with a common network address to be used~~
~~by external network logic.~~